

it is the only known remaining structure to have been used by kidnappers operating a kind of "reverse" Underground Railroad, and it is considered a key site by researchers and historians seeking to preserve relics of this critical time in American history.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to ensuring that the Old Slave House and other sites receive the recognition and protection necessary for their preservation, so that future generations may benefit from the lessons they have to offer. The "National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act" represents a critical step in this process, and I urge my colleagues to vote for its passage today.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of an effort in the Senate to amend the Higher Education Bill. This amendment would give the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, the authority to provide grant money to create an educational center to research and celebrate the history of the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad story is unique in American history. Tens of thousands of enslaved Black men and women risked their lives to pursue freedom. The common bond that led free Blacks, Whites, Native Americans and others to help secure safe passage for the fugitives was the firmly held belief that all human beings have an inalienable right to freedom.

Under the proposed Senate amendment, which may be considered in the next few weeks, the Department of Education would be authorized to evaluate proposals put forward by non-profit educational groups and select one that meets certain criteria, including the utilization of an existing public-private partnership and an on-going endowment to sustain the facility in the future.

In 1990, the Congress directed the National Park Service to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the Underground Railroad. The Park Service found that there were numerous sites in several states involved in the Underground Railroad and, therefore, could not recommend a single site for an Underground Railroad memorial.

The effort in the Senate resolves the matter by providing funds for the development of a major "hub" site and the creation of satellite centers all across the country—as was the actual Underground Railroad operation. Including this bill in the Higher Education Bill also creates more than a historical monument; it provides an educational program dedicated to preserving, displaying and disseminating the history of the Underground Railroad.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Senate will include this amendment and I encourage the House conferees to accept the language of the amendment in conference.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1635 the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998. With the passage of this legislation, which promotes the interpretation and commemoration of the path to freedom for escaped slaves, we will ensure that one of the most important stories in American history is told. It is a real-life drama, with all of the elements which make a compelling story—danger, courage, sacrifice and an undeniable longing for freedom which led to the establishment of the Underground Railroad. It is also a story which illustrates humanity at its best and worst, holding enduring lessons for present and future generations.

I am proud that the Underground Railroad's most famous conductor, Harriet Tubman, spent time in my home state of New Jersey carrying out her momentous mission. This brave African-American heroine, who was a fugitive slave, nurse, abolitionist, and social worker, risked her own life to lead hundreds of slaves to freedom.

Documented as an Underground Railroad Station is a home in Salem, New Jersey, which belonged to Abigail Goodwin, a Quaker and outspoken abolitionist, and her sister, Elizabeth. Under the initiative we are considering today, attention will be given to the stories of people like the Goodwin sisters and those they helped usher to freedom. As we continue a national dialogue on race, we cannot fail to remember such a critical period in our history and its impact on the development of our nation.

Mr. Speaker, as a former educator, I firmly believe in this effort to educate the public about the movement to resist slavery in the United States in the decades leading up to the Civil War. I commend my friend and colleague, Congressman LOUIS STOKES, for introducing this legislation and I look forward to working with the National Park Service and others to successfully implement this effort to facilitate partnerships among federal, state and local governments and the private sector to highlight the Underground Railroad.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1635, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1635, the bill just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

ESTABLISHING MEMORIAL TO HONOR GEORGE MASON

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 423) to extend the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to honor George Mason.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 423

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR MEMORIAL ESTABLISHMENT.

The legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a commemorative work (as defined by section 2 of the Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1002)) shall expire August 10, 2000, notwithstanding the time period limitation specified in section 10(b) of the Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1010(b)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN).

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 423 and urge its adoption. The bill grants a 3-year extension for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to construct a memorial to honor George Mason on Federal land within the District of Columbia.

In 1990, Congress passed public law 101-358 authorizing the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to construct a memorial to George Mason, the American patriot who was the author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights that later served as the model for the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.

George Mason was a contemporary of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. However, he died in 1792, years before his colleagues; and his contributions to the drafting of the U.S. Constitution are sometimes overlooked.

Mr. Speaker, section 10(b) of the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 provides that the legislative authorization to construct a memorial expires 7 years after the date the memorial was authorized by Congress. The date for the George Mason Memorial expired on August 10, 1997. This bill extends the legislative authority for the George Mason Memorial until August 10, 2000.

The Board of Regents of Gunston Hall, George Mason's historic ancestral home, have committed to raising the estimated \$1 million necessary to construct this memorial and endow a maintenance fund.

The National Park Service has approved a site for this memorial garden on Federal land within the District of Columbia, adjacent to the span on the 14th Street Bridge, which has been named in George Mason's honor, and within site of the memorial dedicated to his renowned colleague, Thomas Jefferson.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of S. 423.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, Senate bill 423 is a noncontroversial

measure, passed by the Senate last year, that would extend for 3 years the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to George Mason.

Public law 101-358 authorized the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to George Mason, who is widely recognized for his role in events surrounding the drafting of the U.S. Constitution and its first 10 amendments known as the Bill of Rights.

Plans for the memorial provide for its location on Federal land in the district of Columbia, near the 14th Street Bridge, which was previously named in his honor.

A 3-year extension of the memorial authorization is necessary in order to allow planning and fund-raising to be brought to a successful conclusion. Senate bill 423 was favorably reported from the committee on Resources last October, without amendment. The bill does have the support of the administration. I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 423, legislation to extend the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to honor a distinguished Virginian, George Mason.

In 1776, George Mason wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the first document in America calling for freedom of the press, freedom of religion, proscription of unreasonable searches, and the right to a speedy trial. The Virginia Declaration of Rights not only served as a model for our national Bill of Rights; but historians believe that Mason's refusal to sign the Constitution for its failure, initially, to include a declaration of rights was a major impetus for eventual adoption of the first ten amendments of the Constitution.

George Mason sacrificed friendships by insisting that a strong national government could not be secured without also firmly establishing individual rights, and Mason inevitably chose his family over politics. He retired from public office following the Constitutional Convention and died just a few years later in 1792. His contemporaries, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, lived decades longer and were elected presidents of the United States, and thus Mason's contributions were soon overshadowed.

During the 101st Congress legislation authorizing a private, nonprofit organization to establish a memorial to George Mason on federal land in the District of Columbia passed and was signed by then-President George Bush. In the 102nd Congress, a resolution passed concurring that George Mason was an individual "of preeminent historical significance to the nation," and authorized the placement of the memorial within select Area I lands, in sight of the memorials of two of Mason's closest friends: George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. The legislation was signed into law on April 28, 1992 and approved by the National Capital Memorial Committee in December 1993.

To pay homage to a man whose ideas played a prominent role in the founding of the

American republic, a fitting memorial has been designed for this site, located between Ohio Drive and the 14th Street Bridge, overlooking the Tidal Basin. The memorial designs have been completed and submitted for review to all necessary advisory and review boards and by agreement, the United States Park Service is to maintain the memorial once completed. In accordance with the Commemorative Works Act of 1986, one million dollars must be raised in non-federal funds to construct this historic monument and ground breaking must occur no later than August 1998. The Board of Regents of Gunston Hall Plantation, a historical organization that oversees Mason's family home in Fairfax County, is dedicated to raising the necessary funds for the monument and seeing this important project through to its completion, however, the August 1998 deadline is rapidly approaching. At this time, fund-raising efforts, while successful, will not be completed by the August 1998 deadline. That's why I support this necessary legislation granting an extension until August 2000.

The Commemorative Works Act requires two separate acts of Congress before a memorial may be placed in Area I lands. This monument has met both requirements. The final battle is a fundraising one and the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall has a plan of attack. Last year, they launched Liberty 20000, a campaign to share George Mason's legacy of liberty. The Board of Regents hope to build an endowment fund to ensure a secure future for Gunston Hall and attain the necessary non-federal funds to break ground and complete their efforts to bring George Mason's legacy to the Mall.

This is non-controversial legislation that passed the Senate and the House Resources Committee unanimously. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this three-year extension so we may properly commemorate this great statesman and Virginian, George Mason. Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 423.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid upon the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 423, the Senate bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were commu-

nicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

□ 1630

U.S. HOLOCAUST ASSETS COMMISSION ACT OF 1998

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3662) to establish a commission to examine issues pertaining to the disposition of Holocaust-era assets in the United States before, during, and after World War II, and to make recommendations to the President on further action, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3662

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Presidential Commission, to be known as the "Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States" (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) NUMBER.—The Commission shall be composed of 21 members, appointed in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) APPOINTMENTS.—Of the 21 members of the Commission—

(A) 8 shall be private citizens, appointed by the President;

(B) 4 shall be representatives of the Department of State, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Army, and the Department of the Treasury (1 representative of each such Department), appointed by the President;

(C) 2 shall be Members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(D) 2 shall be Members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(E) 2 shall be Members of the Senate, appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(F) 2 shall be Members of the Senate, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; and

(G) 1 shall be the Chairperson of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

(3) CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP.—Each private citizen appointed to the Commission shall be an individual who has a record of demonstrated leadership on issues relating to the Holocaust or in the fields of commerce, culture, or education that would assist the Commission in analyzing the disposition of the assets of Holocaust victims.

(4) ADVISORY PANELS.—The Chairperson of the Commission may, in the discretion of the Chairperson, establish advisory panels to the Commission, including State or local officials, representatives of organizations having an interest in the work of the Commission, or others having expertise that is relevant to the purposes of the Commission.

(5) DATE.—The appointments of the members of the Commission shall be made not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commission shall be selected by the President from among the members of the Commission appointed under subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(2).